

# India

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Attacks on schools continued in India, primarily in Manipur state, in addition to the military use of at least one school. Attacks on school teachers, students, and staff, and attacks on higher education students and personnel increased slightly in 2024 and 2025 as compared to the previous reporting period.

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## Context

During the 2024-2025 reporting period, tensions between India and Pakistan escalated. A deadly militant assault in Pahalgam on April 22, 2025, located in Indian-administered Kashmir, resulted in a four-day armed conflict between India and Pakistan and the killing of civilians.<sup>1</sup> The attacks intensified tensions between India and Pakistan and led to a reduction in diplomatic engagement.<sup>2</sup> India blamed Pakistan-based groups for the attack that killed 26 people, mostly Hindus, and launched targeted airstrikes against alleged militants inside Pakistan.<sup>3</sup> Pakistan retaliated with drones and airstrikes, leading to an escalation from India. Both sides blamed the other for attacking civilians. At least 16 people were reportedly killed on the Indian side,<sup>4</sup> while Pakistan claimed Indian airstrikes had killed 40 civilians and 11 soldiers.<sup>5</sup>

Throughout the reporting period, religiously-motivated violence against religious minorities, including Muslims and Christians, continued. According to Human Rights Watch, between June and August 2024, there was a surge in violence by Hindu vigilantes, assaulting Muslims on suspicions of consuming beef or transporting cattle for slaughter.<sup>6</sup> Following the deadly attack in Jammu and Kashmir, the angry rhetoric by national broadcast networks and social media users led to Hindu mob attacks against Muslims, particularly Kashmiri students, vendors and workers in various states who faced intimidation, threats, and assault.<sup>7</sup> Additionally, in several states, authorities continued to demolish homes, shops, and religious sites belonging to Muslims, in violation of the Supreme Court's November 2024 ruling that outlawed such arbitrary and punitive demolitions.<sup>8</sup> Ethnic conflict in Manipur state, which broke out in May 2023, continued in 2024 and 2025, and had killed at least 260 and displaced at least 60,000 by 2025, according to Human Rights Watch.<sup>9</sup>

Natural disasters affected children and access to education. Flooding and landslides occurred in several states during the reporting period - including Uttarakhand, Punjab, West Bengal, Himachal Pradesh, Bihar, Kerala, Assam, and Mizoram - leading to temporary disruptions in education.<sup>10</sup> According to UNICEF, record rainfall caused flash floods across Assam state, impacting nearly half a million children and their families; more than 8,000 children were in relief camps for weeks after the floods.<sup>11</sup> Similarly, in Octo-

ber 2024, floods in Bihar caused significant damage to over 775 schools in 29 districts across the state.<sup>12</sup> Additionally, between June 26 and 30, flooding, river overflows, and landslides across Kerala State led to the evacuation of approximately 3,200 people and to the closure of schools in affected areas.<sup>13</sup>

## Attacks on schools

During the 2024-2025 reporting period, GCPEA identified at least 17 reported attacks on schools. The number of attacks increased slightly compared to previous years, when GCPEA collected four attacks on schools in 2023 and six in 2022.<sup>14</sup>

In 2024, GCPEA identified at least ten reported attacks on schools, most of which were arson attacks or bomb threats, and many of which occurred in Manipur state amid ethnic violence.<sup>15</sup> Additionally, media sources reported that over 200 schools received bomb threats during 2024.<sup>16</sup> This number was not included in the total number of attacks on schools, since it was not clear whether these attacks met GCPEA's criteria for inclusion. Attacks identified by GCPEA were:

- On January 17, 2024, local media sources reported that at least three schools, serving over 1,000 students, were allegedly burned down in Moreh town, Manipur state.<sup>17</sup>
- On July 13, 2024, Babukhal primary school in Babukhal village, Manipur state, was targeted in an arson attack, according to local media reports.<sup>18</sup>
- On September 30, 2024, local media reported that four Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) schools received bomb threats, later found to be false, resulting in all of the students being sent home.<sup>19</sup>
- On October 18, 2024, local media reported that unidentified assailants set fire to the Blooming School in Jiribam town, Manipur state.<sup>20</sup>
- On October 21, 2024, an explosive device reportedly detonated in front of the CRPF school in Prashant Vihar town, Delhi state. According to local media, the 'Justice League India,' a Pro-Khalistani Group, claimed responsibility for the attack.<sup>21</sup>
- On November 16, 2024, a school was burned down in Jiribam town, Manipur state, according to local media sources.<sup>22</sup>

In 2025, GCPEA collected at least seven reports of attacks on schools from local media reports, most of which were arson or bomb threats.<sup>23</sup> For example:

- On February 23, 2025, police safely defused a grenade that was reportedly placed in front of a private school in Khair Khas village, Himachal Pradesh state, by unknown assailants.<sup>24</sup>
- On April 23, 2025, the Gampal Primary School in Kamjong district, Manipur state was partially burned by a suspected militant group, according to local media sources.<sup>25</sup>

- On May 4, 2025, Manipur state police safely disposed of a grenade that was found in front of the Princeton International Schools, in Imphal city, Manipur state.<sup>26</sup>
- On May 10, 2025, debris from a missile shot down by India's air defense systems reportedly landed near the AV International Public School in Sirsa city, Haryana state.<sup>27</sup>

## Attacks on school students, teachers, and other education personnel

During the 2024-2025 reporting period, GCPEA collected at least 64 reported attacks on school students, teachers, and other education personnel. The number of attacks increased slightly compared to the last reporting period; GCPEA identified at least ten reported incidents of attacks in 2023, and 45 in 2022.<sup>28</sup> Attacks in 2024 and 2025 involved the reported arrest or detention of over 3,400 students, teachers, and other education personnel.

In 2024, GCPEA identified over 35 reports of attacks on students, teachers, and personnel.<sup>29</sup> For example:

- On January 30, 2024, police reportedly arrested over 550 protesters, including teachers, and 205 of whom were women, during a protest in Madurai city, Tamil Nadu state, who were demanding the government re-introduce a previous pension scheme, fill up vacant posts, and provide additional benefits.<sup>30</sup>
- On May 3, 2024, around 1,000 teachers staged a protest in front of West Bengal School Service Commission in Kolkata city, West Bengal state, against a recent ruling by the High Court that invalidated the recruitment process of teachers. Police reportedly detained nearly 100 protestors, according to ACLED and local media.<sup>31</sup>
- On June 18, 2024, according to local media reports, police forcefully detained around 300 teaching candidates during a protest demanding the regularization of jobs in Gandhinagar city, Gujarat state.<sup>32</sup>
- On July 3, 2024, a group of assistant professors and librarians associated with Government College, Punjab protested in relation to recruitment outside the Chief Minister's home. Allegedly, the protestors were forcibly removed and detained at the Jamsher police station.<sup>33</sup>
- On October 9, 2024, teachers and government employees affiliated with the Joint Action Committee for Employees and Teachers staged a protest in Hyderabad city, Telangana state. Police reportedly detained around 14 protesters, as reported by ACLED and local media.<sup>34</sup>

In 2025, GCPEA collected at least 29 reports of attacks on students, teachers, and personnel, from local media reports.<sup>35</sup> For example:

- On April 5, 2025, police reportedly baton charged and detained an unspecified number of students and at least 11 teachers during a protest at Adarsh Senior Secondary School in Chauke village, in Punjab state.<sup>36</sup>
- On May 30, 2025, police reportedly arrested over 100 teachers who were protesting in Kolkata city, West Bengal State, to demand the reissuance of examinations.<sup>37</sup>
- On August 18, 2025, local media sources reported that police detailed several protesters and used batons to disperse a large number of aspiring teachers during a protest in Patna city, Bihar state, demanding that the State Teacher Eligibility Test be given prior to the recruitment examination.<sup>38</sup>
- On October 22, 2025, a number of students blocked the entrance of Ramraibari High School during a protest against recent staffing shortages in Jolaibari village, Tripura state. Dozens of students were reportedly injured when police used batons to disperse them, according to local media sources.<sup>39</sup>
- On December 27, 2025, police reportedly used force and detained over 1,000 protesters, including members of the Secondary Grade Seniority Teachers' Association, during a demonstration demanding pay parity in front of the Chief Education Officer's office in Chennai city, Tamil Nadu state, according to local media sources.<sup>40</sup>

## Military use of schools and universities

In the current reporting period, GCPEA identified two reports of military use of schools; a slight increase from the previous 2022-2023 reporting period, when GCPEA did not identify any incidents of military use.<sup>41</sup>

GCPEA identified one report in 2024: on February 14, 2024, members of armed groups allegedly exchanged fire with police forces in Sugnu town, Manipur state, as reported by ACLED and local media. One bomb landed in the Sugnu Higher Secondary School, where members of the Border Security Force were allegedly stationed.<sup>42</sup>

In 2025, GCPEA identified one report of military use of a school: on May 28, 2025, members of an armed group reportedly surrounded a local school that the Zomi Revolutionary Army group was occupying in Thanlon village, Manupur state, as reported by ACLED and local media.<sup>43</sup>

## Attacks on higher education

In 2024 and 2025, GCPEA identified at least 154 reported attacks on higher education. The police reportedly used excessive force against higher education students and personnel during this reporting period. Attacks on higher education primarily involved repression of on-campus or education-related protests, rather than attacks on higher education facilities, continuing a trend from *Education under Attack 2024*. Attacks on higher education increased compared to the last reporting period, when GCPEA collected approximately 25 attacks in 2023 and 55 in 2022.<sup>44</sup>

In 2024, GCPEA identified at least 82 reported incidents of attacks on higher education.<sup>45</sup> For example:

- On January 11, 2024, police reportedly detained around 150 Periyar University students who were protesting against a visit by Tamil Nadu state governor R.N. Ravi in Salem city, Tamil Nadu state, according to Scholars at Risk and local media sources.<sup>46</sup>
- On February 23, 2024, an improvised explosive device (IED) reportedly detonated inside the office of a student organization at the Dhanamanjuri University in Imphal city, Manipur state, as reported by ACLED and local media. The blast injured one individual and killed another, although GCPEA was unable to ascertain their status as students or education staff.<sup>47</sup>
- On March 10, 2024, police reportedly detained a number of Kerala State University students who staged a sit-in demonstration at the University Senate Hall in Thiruvananthapuram city, Kerala state, during the youth festival, as reported by ACLED and local media.<sup>48</sup>
- On June 20, 2024, members of several student organizations, including Students' Federation of India, All India Students Association, Democratic Students' Front, and Krantikari Yuva Sangathan, reportedly protested against the education ministry cancelling the University Grants Commission National Eligibility Test (UGC NET) examination in Delhi. Police reportedly arrested around 50 protesters, according to ACLED and local media reports.<sup>49</sup>
- On July 10, 2024, police reportedly beat and detained around 15 students during a protest at Osmania University, Hyderabad city, Telangana state, according to Scholars at Risk.<sup>50</sup>
- On October 28, 2024, an IED was reportedly found and subsequently diffused at the main entrance of Ghanapriya Women's College, in Imphal city, Manipur state, as reported by Scholars at Risk.<sup>51</sup>
- On December 6, 2024, police allegedly used tear gas against students protesting in front of Ghanapriya Women's College in Imphal city, Manipur state, as reported by Scholars at Risk and ACLED. The students were demanding the government release their pending scholarship.<sup>52</sup>

- On December 21, 2024, students and members of the Panjab University Bachao Morcha student group protested against various issues, including conducting university senate elections, university sports facilities, and the installation of a statue on campus, outside the student center at Panjab University in the shared capital of Chandigarh city, Punjab and Haryana state. Police detained around ten students, according to ACLED and local media sources.<sup>53</sup>

In 2025, GCPEA identified at least 72 reported attacks incidents of attacks on higher education.<sup>54</sup> For instance:

- On February 6, 2025, police reportedly detained a number of aspiring teachers during a protest demanding new teaching appointments in Kolkata city, West Bengal, as reported by local media sources.<sup>55</sup>
- On March 29, 2025, police reportedly used force to disperse a large number of student protesters at the University of Hyderabad, in Hyderabad city, Telangana state, according to local media sources. The students were protesting against the Government's proposed plan to auction off Kancha Gachibowli, a 400-acre plot of land which many believe belongs to the university.<sup>56</sup>
- On June 20, 2025, students reportedly protested at Chaudhary Charan Singh Haryana Agricultural University in Hisar city, Haryana state, against the university's scholarship policy. Police reportedly used batons to disperse the protesters, injuring 20 students, according to local media sources.<sup>57</sup>
- On July 4, 2025, police detained several students and members of the Democratic Youth Federation of India during a protest against the lack of jobs and high level of unemployment in Hyderabad city, Telangana state.<sup>58</sup>
- On August 2, 2025, police reportedly detained more than 200 protesters, including members of the National Students' Union of India, during a demonstration against the student welfare schemes, recruitment irregularities, and fellowship cuts in New Delhi city, Delhi state.<sup>59</sup>
- On October 9, 2025, students, including members of the Students' Federation of India, protested at Pondicherry University in Puducherry city and state, demanding changes to the complaints committee and for better inquiries into complaints of sexual harassment. Police reportedly baton charged and kicked the students in an attempt to disperse the protesters, and detained more than 20 students, according to local media sources.<sup>60</sup>
- On December 20, 2025, police reportedly detained students protesting against a hike in examination fees at the Maharana Bhupal College in Barmer city, Rajasthan state, according to media sources.<sup>61</sup>